

I value the choice I have when choosing a DSL supplier. After being with a number of large internet suppliers for a while I have purposely chosen for a small ISP, who can provide for my specific needs (high speed, high tech, and brilliant customer service). Large ISPs are just not geared up for my type of customer. They are too slow, their help desk fodder too technically illiterate. Their waiting times are too long. They don't understand what FTP and Linux mean.

I am happy to pay the (slightly) higher price with my current provider to avoid the masses of non-understanding people who clog up customer support when I really need it.

Most of all, I feel that this is an issue of freedom to operate a business. Since these companies have been working in their area of business for a long time, it would be completely inappropriate to now suddenly decide that they can't do what they do.

It would be like the FDA deciding that only the top five pharmaceutical companies can produce medicines, which would rob patients from a range of specialty pharmaceuticals that enrich their lives. Or like the DMV only approving Ford cars for road use; can you imagine?!

Traditionally there have been large phone companies who laid the cables and maintained the network and they should be rewarded for that. In an ideal world I would want all companies to be able to provide me at home with their own cable, telephone and DSL. However, from a practical point of view this is impossible (the roads would be dug up by hundreds of companies trying to lay their own cables). The solution is to form a company which holds the infrastructure, and provides a service to all telephone companies and ISPs who would pay them for connecting my house to their servers and exchanges. This would bring the small ISPs on par with the larger ones, although the latter could still flex their muscle and negotiate lower rates because of their larger number of connections.

In a way this discussion will be over in a few years when wireless networks have matured, and we will no longer be dependent on the cable that connects our home to the internet. Small companies could afford local transmitters, maybe mount them on the cellphone transmitters.

Keep small DSL providers in business! Give us Choice!